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Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-13 OMB-01 ACDA-19 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-07 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 AID-20 EB-11 CIEP-02 TRSE-00

STR-08 CEA-02 EUR-25 COME-00 RSR-01 /181 W
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R 031018 Z JUL 73
FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4601
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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TAGS: PFOR, MY
SUBJECT: BAGUIO MEETING ON SEA NEUTRALIZATION

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 2763

SUMMARY: ACCORDING MFA OFFICIAL, BAGUIO MEETING OF SENIOR ASEAN OFFICIALS MADE PROGRESS IN DEFINING SCHEME FOR CREATION OF " ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY" IN SEA, BUT MUCH REMAINS TO BE DONE AND THAT FINAL FORMULATION FOR PRESENTATION TO FOREIGN MINISTERS IS PROBABLY AT LEAST YEAR AWAY. THERE WAS SOME AGREEMENT ON PEACE- KEEPING ARRANGEMENTS AMONG ASEAN FIVE PRIOR TO SETTING UP " ZONE" AND AGREEMENT ON NECESSITY OF MORE FORMAL MACHINERY TO SETTLE INTRA- REGIONAL DISPUTES ONCE ZONE IS ESTABLISHED. HE CONFIRMED THAT BIG- POWER GUARANTEES HAVE BEEN DROPPED AND REPLACED BY LESS BINDING " RECOGNITION AND RESPECT " FOR ZONE. OFFICIAL DESCRIBED MEETING AS MORE SERIOUS AND LESS CONTENTIOUS THAN PREVIOUS

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TWO, BUT REVEALED THAT PHILIPPINES WAS MOST DIFFICULT IN INTERPOSING PROBLEMS AND OBJECTIONS. EMBASSY HAS SOME INDCATION THAT TOP GOM LEADERSHIP NOT IMPRESSED BY RESULTS OF MEETING. END SUMMARY.

1. MFA UNDER SECRETARY TALALLA JULY 3 BRIEFED EMBOFF ON THIRD ASEAN SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING TO FORMULATE SEA NEUTRALIZATION SCHEME WHICH WAS HELD IN BAGUIO JUN 20-22. HE ADMITTED THAT THERE HAD BEEN A SEMANTIC CHANGE AND THAT INSTEAD OF REFERING TO " SEA NEUTRALIZATION", WHICH HAD SENSITIVE CONNOTATIONS FOR SOME OF ASEAN FIVE AS WELL AS CERTAIN GREAT POWERS, CREATION OF " ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY" WOULD HENCEFORTH BE USED. HE SAW LITTLE SIGNIFICANCE IN CHANGE OTHER THAN CATERING TO CERTAIN SENSTIVITIES.

2. ONE OF TWO MAJOR TOPICS DISCUSSED WAS SETTLEMENT OF INTRA- REGIONAL DISPOSES. PRIOR TO CREATION OF ZONE, OFFICIALS AGREED THAT CERTAIN ARRANGEMENTS OR PRINCIPLES SHOULD GUIDE THE SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES AMONG ASEAN FIVE. THESE PRINCIPLES WOULD INCLUDE COMMITTMENT TO PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES, THAT PARTIES TO A DISPUTE WOULD ATTEMPT TO SOLVE BILATERAL PROBLEMS WITHIN THE REGION WITHOUT REFERENCE TO OUTSIDE POWERS, AND A WILLINGNESS OF ALL TO PROVIDE GOOD OFFICES IN THE EVENT OF A DISPUTE BETWEEN TWO ASEAN MEMBERS.

3. ONCE THE ZONE IS ESTABLISHED, ACCORDING TO TALALLA, MORE FORMAL PEACE- KEEPING MACHINERY SHOULD BE SET UP. THEY DO NOT ENVISAGE THIS AS A JUDICIAL BODY, BUT RATHER AN ORGANIZATION WHICH COULD FACILITATE POLITICAL SOLUTIONS, PERHAPS INVOLVING MEDIATION. TALALLA SAID THAT PHILIPPINES WAS PARTICULARLY STICKY ON THIS POINT, NOT WISHING TO COMMIT THEMSELVES ON PARTICULAR TYPE OF MACHINERY. THE DETAILS OF MACHINERY WERE DEFERRED FOR DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT SENIOR OFFICIALS MEETING.

4. TALALLA SAID THAT THERE WAS OVERALL CONSENSUS THAT " GUARANTEES" FROM THE BIG POWERS SHOULD BE SCRAPPED AND REPLACED BY THE LESS BINDING AND LESS FORMAL " RECOGNITION AND RESPECT". SOME OF THE COUNTRIES WERE FEARFUL LEST

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" GUARANTEES" BECOME AN EXCUSE FOR BIG POWER INTERFERENCE WHICH WOULD OBVIATE THE MAIN OBJECTIVE TO INSULATE THE REGION FROM BIG POWER POLITICS. INDONESIA WAS PARTICULARLY SENSTIVE THAT GUARANTEES MIGHT PERPETUATE THE COLONIAL IMAGE OF BIG POWERS PROTECTING SMALLER STATES.

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5. THE OFFICIALS AGREED THAT INITIALLY THE US, THE SOVIET UNION AND THE PRC WOULD BE SOUGHT TO " RECOGNIZE AND RESPECT" THE ZONE, BUT OTHER POWERS WHICH HAD STRATEGIC OR ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN THE REGION MIGHT LATER BE ASKED.

6. TALALLA SAID THAT EXPECTATIONS FROM THE RECOGNIZING POWERS WERE DISCUSSED. AS EXAMPLES HE OFFERED THAT BIG POWERS SHOULD NOT GIVE AID WITH POLITICAL STRINGS ATTACHED AND THEY SHOULD NOT SET UP MILITARY BASES WITHIN THE REGION. IN CASE ONE POWER VIOLATED THESE EXPECTATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, BY UTILIZING NUCLEAR BLACKMAIL AGAINST OR SUPORTING INTERNAL INSURGENCIES IN THE ZONE, THE OTHER RECOGNIZING POWERS WOULD FEEL SOME OBLIGATION TO REDRESS THE VIOLATION.

7. TALALLA SAID THAT THERE WAS SOME PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION ABOUT THE MANNER IN WHICH BIG POWER " RECOGNITION" WOULD BE MANIFESTED, BUT IT WAS DECIDED TO STUDY THIS FURTHER
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AND TAKE IT UP AT THE NEXT MEETING.

8. TALALLA ASSERTED THAT GOM FELT SOME PROGRESS HAD BEEN MADE AT MEETING IN FLESHING OUT THE PROPOSAL, BUT THAT AT LEAST ONE AND PROBABLY TWO MORE SENIOR OFFICIALS' MEETINGS WOULD BE REQUIRED BEFORE AN AGREED UPON FORMULA WOULD BE READY FOR PRESENTATION TO THE ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS. THE VENUE IS TENTATIVELY SINGAPORE BUT THE TIMING OF NEXT MEETING HAS NOT BEEN AGREED UPON, ALTHOUGH PAST EXPERIENCE INDICATES THE NEXT SESSION TOWARD THE END OF THIS YEAR.

9. COMMENT: EVEN GIVEN TALALLA' S TIMING, WHICH MAY BE OPTIMISTIC, A FINAL FORUMLATION OF THE PROPOSAL FOR ASEAN FOREIGN MINISTERS' CONSIDERATION WILL NOT BE READY BEFORE THE SUMMER OF 1974 AND SIGNS IN KUALA LUMPUR ARE THAT THE GOM LEADERSHIP IS NOT ANXIOUS TO PUSH AHEAD ANY FASTER. ALTHOUGH IT IS TO BE EXPECTED THAT TALALLA, WHO HAS BEEN GOM THEOLOGIAN AND CHIEF PROMOTER OF NEUTRALIZATION CONCEPT, SHOULD TRY TO PUT THE BEST FACE ON THE PROCESS, WE HAVE HEARD THAT MFA SECGEN ZAITON, WHO LED MALAYSIAN DELEGATION AT BAGUIO, TOLD THE AUSTRALIANS RECENTLY THAT NOTHING NEW EMERGED ROM THE MEETING.

10. THEIR WILLINGNESS TO CHANGE DESIGNATION OF PROPOSAL AND TO WATER- DOWN " GUARANTEE" CONCEPT CLEARLY INDICATES THAT GOM NOW FULLY APPRECIATES SENSITIVITIES OF ASEAN COLLEAGUES AND BIG POWERS TO CERTAIN ASPECTS OF NEUTRALI-ZATION PROPOSAL. WHILE FOR PRESTIGE CONSIDERATIONS WE WOULD EXPECT GOM TO CONTINUE TO PROMINENTLY UTILIZE CONCEPT IN OFFICIAL AND UNOFFICIAL RHETORIC, THEY ARE ULIKELY TO PROMOTE IDEA AMONG ASEAN STATES OR BIG POWERS WITH THE SAME VIGOR AND CONVICTION AS PREVIOUSLY.
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